

**HOMETOWN SECURITY STUDY COMMITTEE
DRAFT MINUTES**

May 21, 2003, 1145 hours

Members Present: Chair General Stanley Heng, Carol Brown, Oscar Rios Pohirieth, Jim Geist, Don Marti, Jeff Fortenberry, Major Guy Moon, Ken Svoboda, Larry Hudkins, Tom Casady, John Huff for Mike Spadt, Bruce Dart

Not in Attendance: Annette McRoy, Julie Righter

City Staff & Other Public Present: Jeff Cole (Staff), Corrie Kielty (Staff), Darrell Podany (Council Office), Nate Jenkins (Lincoln Journal Star)

Approval of Minutes

General Heng called for approval of the minutes of the May 14th meeting. **Larry Hudkins moved approval of the minutes, seconded by Jim Geist. Motion carried by unanimous vote.**

Work Group Reports

Police/911: The order of business at today's meeting centered around the approval of 911/Police subcommittee recommendations. Each recommendation was reviewed and voted upon individually. Don Marti reported for the Police/911 subcommittee.

911 Center

Recommendation #1a: The Police/911 Center workgroup recommends that if the City approves recommendation #1, the additional surcharge be used to enhance the community's emergency communications capabilities (with the 911 Center having first priority), not to decrease the amount of General Fund revenue allocated for these uses. Uses of these funds should be planned for and reviewed annually.

Ken Svoboda moved approval of Recommendation #1, seconded by Larry Hudkins. Discussion followed the motion. Jim Geist wished to go on record that he was opposed to the surcharge increase. Jeff Fortenberry said at a previous meeting he had asked for the status of the general obligation bond that was issued for the funding of the 911 Center. If the obligation bond is almost done and the tax rate is going to decrease, he would then support a shift in the way in which that method of tax collection is coming about. His preference is that the City look at where that bond issue is at, use the refinancing of it for the remainder period, and when that bond issue is done, switch to an alternative means of funding as an ongoing basis like the 50 cent increase. Larry Hudkins said the consensus of the County Board is to get a bond versus the surcharge increase. Jeff Cole said Steve Hubka is going to package several outstanding bond obligations into a new issuance. Jim Geist said he is not opposed to increasing the budget for 911, but he reiterated that the Council and the Mayor needs to do a better job of establishing their priorities on how to spend tax monies. Jeff Fortenberry said there is a distinction between advocating the recognition for the increase of resources for the 911 Center and the method by which those resources are obtained. Carol Brown reminded members that Recommendation #1

(to increase the surcharge) was passed at last week's meeting.

Ken Svoboda withdrew his motion for approval of Recommendation #1 and restated his motion to approve Recommendation #1a, seconded by Larry Hudkins. General Heng called for vote on the motion. Voting in favor of Recommendation #1a Ahlberg, Brown, Casady, Dart, Fortenberry, Heng, Hudkins, Huff, Marti, Moon, Pohirieth, Svoboda. Those opposed Geist. Motion carried.

Recommendation #4: The Police/911 workgroup recommends that the City set up a replacement fund to finance future mobile communications need.

Don Marti said Recommendation #4 is a wording change, originally referred to as sinking fund. Agencies involved would contribute to this fund based upon their needs and it would be drawn upon as needed for replacement of portable radio systems. Funding source for the replacement fund would be out of the budgets of the individual user agencies.

Motion by Jim Geist, seconded by Doug Ahlberg to approve Recommendation #4. General Heng called for vote on the motion. Voting in favor of Recommendation #1a Ahlberg, Brown, Casady, Dart, Fortenberry, Geist, Heng, Hudkins, Huff, Marti, Moon, Pohirieth, Svoboda. None opposed. Motion carried.

Police Department, Overall Staffing Levels

Recommendation #1: The Police/911 workgroup recommends that the Police Department strive to reach a staffing level of 1.5 officers for every 1,000 residents over the next decade.

Don Marti said this would place the department at the top of the bottom 1/3rd of comparable agencies. The average number of officers for those agencies is 1.97 per 1,000.

Motion by Doug Ahlberg to approve Recommendation #1, seconded by Ken Svoboda. Jim Geist felt it would be of greater value to have more concrete information on why more police officers are needed rather than just ratios. Chief Casady mentioned difficulty responding to calls for service during peak workload times, difficulty conducting training, difficulty getting backup to officers on the street, hard time doing problem solving activities (proactive policing) as some of the reasons the city needs a larger police force. Major Moon added that this recommendation is self-adjusting for the population base. As the population continues to grow, the ratios themselves are relative because of the fact that the number of police officers increase as the population grows.

General Heng called for a vote on the motion. Voting in favor of Recommendation #1 on Overall Staffing Levels Ahlberg, Brown, Casady, Dart, Fortenberry, Geist, Heng, Hudkins, Huff, Marti, Moon, Pohirieth, Svoboda. None opposed. Motion carried.

Recommendation #2: The Police/911 workgroup recommends that the Police Department utilize Federal grants to support hiring 12 new officers in the 2003-04 fiscal year as a first step toward reaching this goal.

Chief Casady explained that the Police Department has COPS Grants awarded for eleven officers that pay \$25,000 per year per officer for three years. He has three pending grant applications and one, and perhaps more than one, will be awarded. COPS Grants are short lived and it is unknown how long the program will be around. Ken Svoboda said because of the large cost with putting twelve officers on at any one time, he would rather see a more stepped approach to achieving that 1.5 officers per 1,000 as opposed to putting all 12 new officers on the street at one time. Don Marti said the workgroup had discussed a stepped approach, but the COPS Grant money is available now and if it is not taken advantage, it may be gone.

Motion by Carol Brown to accept Recommendation #2, seconded by Jeff Fortenberry. General Heng called for a vote on the motion. Voting in favor of Recommendation #2 on Overall Staffing Levels Ahlberg, Brown, Casady, Dart, Fortenberry, Geist, Heng, Hudkins, Huff, Marti, Moon, Pohirieth. Those opposed Svoboda. Motion carried.

Committee members Doug Ahlberg, Major Guy Moon and Bruce Dart left the meeting at 1250 hours.

Use of Civilian Support Staff

Recommendation #1. The Police/911 workgroup recommends that the Police Department strive to maintain its current 3:1 officer to civilian staff ratio.

Chief Casady said that LPD is 26% civilian, the average of other cities. The civilian staff is not only support staff, but some also deliver field services, and the Police Department will increasingly use civilian non sworn police officers to deliver field services. The risk of going below that ratio is that officers would have to be assigned to positions that would otherwise be held by civilians, which means they would have to be taken off the street.

Motion by Carol Brown to adopt Recommendation #1, seconded by Larry Hudkins. Voting in favor of Recommendation #1 on Civilian Support Staff Brown, Casady, Fortenberry, Geist, Heng, Hudkins, Huff, Marti, Pohirieth, Svoboda. None opposed. Motion carried.

Recommendation #2: The Police/911 workgroup recommends that the Police Department explore and make use of additional civilian support staff (specifically Public Service Officers in response to incidents that do not require the services of a sworn Police Officer) where possible and to do so at its discretion.

There are a number of incidents that can be handled by non-commissioned paraprofessional personnel; i.e. traffic accidents, low dollar vandalisms, larcenies with no suspects and no evidence at the scene. This recommendation is to enhance the officer's position, not to replace them.

Motion by Chief Casady to adopt Recommendation #2, seconded by Jim Geist. General Heng called for a vote on the motion. Voting in favor of Recommendation #2 on Civilian Support Staff Ahlberg, Brown, Casady, Dart, Fortenberry, Geist, Heng, Hudkins, Huff, Marti, Moon, Pohirieth, Svoboda. None opposed. Motion carried.

Recommendation #3: The Police/911 workgroup recognizes that Federal grant opportunities exist to support the hiring of 12 new officers in fiscal year 2003-04 and strongly recommends the City take advantage of this opportunity to add much needed officers to the force. Because of this one-time opportunity, the workgroup understands that it will be necessary to delay hiring the additional civilian support staff needed to support these new officers by a year. The Police/911 workgroup supports this decision but recommends that these civilian support staff positions are made a priority in the following year's budget request.

Chief Casady said this recommendation would cause him to prioritize more civilian support staff when preparing next year's budget proposal.

Motion by Carol Brown to approve Recommendation #3, seconded by Larry Hudkins. General Heng called for a vote on the motion. Voting in favor of Recommendation #3 on Civilian Support Staff Brown, Casady, Fortenberry, Geist, Heng, Hudkins, Huff, Marti, Pohirieth. Those opposed Svoboda. Motion carried.

Use of Police Substations

Recommendation #1: The Police/911 workgroup recommends that the City continue the practice of developing neighborhood/beat substations in targeted, high priority areas where such stations would enhance the Department's effectiveness and increase visibility. Wherever possible, develop neighborhood substations in conjunction with the development of other public buildings, such as schools, fire stations, recreation centers and libraries.

Motion by Jim Geist to approve Recommendation #1, seconded by Ken Svoboda. General Heng called for a vote on the motion. Voting in favor of Recommendation #1 on Police Substations Brown, Casady, Fortenberry, Geist, Heng, Hudkins, Huff, Marti, Pohirieth, Svoboda. None opposed. Motion carried.

Recommendation #2: The Police/911 workgroup recommends that the city develop one or more additional District Substations that allow the department to better respond to the needs of our growing community. District/Team Substations also provide the Police Department with backup office capacity for core administrative functions. Whenever possible, the Police Department should explore the feasibility of developing new substations in conjunction with new Fire Department or 911 Center facilities. Priority should be given to providing District Substations in the fast growing eastern and southern parts of our city.

Motion by Jim Geist to approve Recommendation #2, seconded by Ken Svoboda. Because of the growth that will be shifting to the north and northwest, Larry Hudkins recommended a rewording of the recommendation to eliminate eastern and southern and to just say the fast growing parts of our City.

General Heng called for a vote on the language change. Voting in favor of eliminating eastern and southern from Recommendation #2 Brown, Casady, Fortenberry, Geist, Heng, Hudkins,

Huff, Marti, Pohirieth, Svoboda. None opposed. Motion carried.

General Heng called for a vote on the reworded recommendation. Voting in favor of Recommendation #2 on Use of Police Substations Brown, Casady, Fortenberry, Geist, Heng, Hudkins, Huff, Marti, Pohirieth, Svoboda. None opposed. Motion carried.

Other Discussion

Jeff Fortenberry brought up for discussion 911 Center Recommendations #6 and #7 that were passed at last week's meeting. If these recommendations came to pass (fees on cellular towers, restructuring the way the Legislature apportions revenues from the cellular tax), could those funds be used to offset increases in the surcharge. Chief Casady said the city has aggressively been trying to figure out ways to get revenue from existing structures by leasing space to wireless carriers. He does not see that as a source of much revenue. The cell phone user fee, however, would raise a lot of revenue.

Jeff Fortenberry suggested amending Recommendation #6 and #7 to state that any fees generated from these potential funding sources, or any other potential funding sources should be used to offset the landline surcharge. Don Marti suggested that instead of amending #6 and #7, that another Recommendation be made that any revenue generated under Recommendation #6 and Recommendation #7 or revenue generated from other sources as yet unidentified be used to offset the surcharge. Jeff Cole will prepare the recommendation, forward it to Committee members for review and it will be brought back at next week's meeting for a vote.

Jeff Fortenberry mentioned the taxing on the 911 Center by cellular users reporting incidents and suggested finding ways to encourage the prudent use of 911 in order to take some of the load off the system by weeding out non-essential calls. Chief Casady said this is a nation-wide problem with cellular phones. Incidents are able to be reported immediately, but they are reported by many different callers. We do an excellent job in Lincoln of discouraging citizens from using 911 for inappropriate calls and our citizens do a good job of using the non emergency number or administrative number. The inside cover of the telephone book lists the non emergency number, and may be the reason why 911 does not get a lot of non emergency calls. Jeff Fortenberry made a motion that Julie Righter continue to explore possibilities of relieving the 911 system of non-emergency calls. Seconded by Chief Casady. Jeff Cole will write up this recommendation, provide it to Committee members for review, and it will be brought up at next week's meeting for a vote.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be on Wednesday, May 28th, 1145 hours in Classroom A. On the agenda will be voting on the recommendation that any revenue generated under 911 Center Recommendation #6 and Recommendation #7 or revenue generated from other sources as yet unidentified be used to offset the surcharge, recommendation that Julie Righter continue to explore possibilities of relieving the 911 system of non-emergency calls, Fire/EMS Workgroup Recommendations and General Recommendations.

Meeting adjourned at 1308 hours.

Submitted by: Virginia Fischer